

Part 2 (of 2 parts):

## Gehenna in the Synoptics

Hans Scharen  
Associate Pastor, Midlothian Bible Church  
Midlothian, Texas

The first article in this series discussed the development of the concept of Gehenna in the Old Testament and the intertestamental period.<sup>1</sup> It was observed that this concept is rooted in the literature of intertestamental Judaism, specifically within the more narrowly defined subject of apocalyptic eschatology, and that several ideas were associated with the concept. In contrast to this variety, the New Testament presents Gehenna as the final eschatological punishment for the wicked. The aim of this study is to confirm and amplify this latter idea based on New Testament texts and vocabulary.

### Warnings about Personal Destiny

MATTHEW 5:22<sup>2</sup>

Matthew 5:21-22 contains the thesis and antithesis of a saying

<sup>1</sup> Hans Scharen, "Gehenna in the Synoptics, Part 1," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 149 (July–September 1992): 304-15.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek text of this verse has no variant readings deserving serious discussion, though form-critical as well as tradition-historical considerations have generated a considerable amount of discussion among New Testament scholars. As Metzger notes, the reading with **ειη** is widespread after the second century. But there seems to be good reason to believe that it represents a scribal gloss so as to "soften the rigor of the precept" (Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* [New York: United Bible Societies, 1971], 13).

Opinions vary regarding the verse's integrity. There appears to be a consensus among many scholars that one or more of the three clauses of 5:22 are secondary, though there are some dissenting opinions, among them that of Guelich, who, after a survey of these discussions concluded that "there is no valid reason why Mt 5:22 could not have been an authentic whole rather than a composite unit" (Robert A. Guelich, "Mt 5:22: Its Meaning and Integrity," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 64 [1973]: 4749). Luz also opts for its unity and says it is a genuine saying of Jesus (Ulrich Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Mattäus*, Evangelischer Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament [EKKNT] I/1 [Zurich: Benziger Verlag, 1985], 1:251).

of Jesus that discusses the relationship between brothers (**adelphoi**) within the kingdom of heaven. It follows the exhortation of Jesus in verse 20, that entrance into (=belonging to) this kingdom requires a better righteousness than that taught and displayed by the religious leaders (scribes and Pharisees) of the day. The thesis in verse 21 is introduced by the words, "You have heard . . ." and the antithesis is introduced in verse 22 by the words "but I say unto you. . . ."<sup>3</sup> The thesis contains the Mosaic injunction against murder and the consequent liability to court proceedings of anyone committing this crime. In the antithesis (v. 22) Jesus refuted a superficial interpretation of the sixth commandment (Exod. 20:13; Deut. 5:17), such as could be practiced by mere perfunctory adherence to a legal ordinance designed to regulate human relationships. The "I say unto you" nullifies any claim of righteousness attained in that perfunctory way. The true intent of the command against murder is more radical in its demand. It is concerned with the disposition of the heart, not mere externals.<sup>4</sup>

The difficulty of interpreting the triadic structure of the antithesis has created much scholarly discussion.<sup>5</sup> The main point relevant to determining the meaning of Gehenna in this text is the incongruity between the crimes listed and the severity of their respective punishments. The order of these punishments displays an obvious ascendance in severity: court (court proceeding), Sanhedrin, Gehenna of fire. "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever shall say to his brother, 'Raca,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever shall say, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell [Gehenna]." Thus one would expect a corresponding ascendance in severity of infractions of legal ordinances. But this correspondence

<sup>3</sup> As noted in the previous article in this series, this formula indicates a departure and contrast from the teaching of the Old Testament, the contrast involving transcendence rather than contradiction, as indicated by Jesus' statement in Matthew that He did not come to abolish "the Law or the Prophets" but "to fulfill" (**plhrow**) in the sense of bringing or revealing their full, definitive meaning in His person and work as the Messiah (Scharen, "Gehenna in the Synoptics," 331).

<sup>4</sup> This notion was in essence taught by Moses in his stress that obedience to God must come from the heart (see, e.g., Deut. 10:16; 10:17; cf. Lev. 19:17-18), but it was missed by the Jewish religious leadership in Jesus' day.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*, vol. 1: Matthew I-VII, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988), 515-16, for a brief, recent documentation of the various interpretive approaches. Cf. Guelich, "Mt 5:22: Its Meaning and Integrity," 39-52, for a fuller discussion of the lexical and structural problems with their respective interpretations. The former center mainly around the exact meanings of **krisei**, **raka**, and **nwre**; the latter focus mainly on the parallelism between the individual members of the triad (triple response) as it relates to the apparent incongruity of the judgments.

does not occur. In the first part of the verse the infraction is anger, which makes a person liable to general court proceedings (v. 22a); in the second section the infraction is calling someone "numbskull" (**ṛḥka**), which makes a person liable to proceedings by the Sanhedrin (v. 22b); a person who calls someone a "fool" (**mwre**) as an invective is condemned to Gehenna (v. 22c).<sup>6</sup> Several scholars have attempted to alleviate the tension created by the incongruity between crime and punishment, either by emending the text, or by amplifying the slight disparity between the listed crimes, or by attenuating the disparity between the respective punishments.

The attempted attenuation consists in transferring the concept of the Gehenna of fire from a figurative to a literal realm on earth. Those who hold this view maintain that Gehenna refers to the literal site of the valley of Hinnom south of Jerusalem (the supposed depository of city offal with its perpetually burning fires), not to the final judgment of God involving the destiny of the wicked or enemies of God. It is argued that the burning of one's corpse at this site would involve a greater condemnation than being judged and condemned by the Sanhedrin and would represent the climax of the noted intensification of the punishments described in the antithesis in 5:22. Thus one would observe a closer correspondence between the crimes and their respective punishments.<sup>7</sup> The obvious question is whether this literal interpretation of the "Gehenna of fire" is legitimate and represents Jesus' use of it. The absence of archaeological as well as literary evidence for such a site in the valley of Hinnom, as pointed out earlier, argues against it.<sup>8</sup>

Guelich's interpretation requires no emendation of the text and fits the context better in that it does justice to Jesus' antithetical statement with its implied radical demand for a "better righteousness," which, as in the case of His teaching on adultery, does not fo-

<sup>6</sup> Lexical studies indicate that there is little difference between calling someone **ṛḥka** or **mwre** despite attempts by some commentators to see a significant difference. The former is an Aramaic derivative of an uncomplimentary nature, and the latter is a common Greek term of similar nuance.

<sup>7</sup> This traditional interpretation is based on Rabbi David Kimchi's commentary on Psalm 27. See, for example, Henry Burton Sharman, *The Teaching of Jesus about the Future according to the Synoptic Gospels* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1909), 257-58. He opts for this interpretation which is representative of the older, critical commentators. But this approach is not confined to the commentaries of an earlier era; it is still represented in recent discussions. For example Strawson states that Jesus had in mind the "physical fact of the valley of Hinnom" (William Strawson, *Jesus and the Future Life* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1959], 145).

<sup>8</sup> See Scharen, "Gehenna in the Synoptics," 328, n. 18. Cf. idem, "The Development of the Concept of Gehenna and its Use in the Synoptics" (ThD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1991), 176, n. 96.

cus on the external act but on the inner attitude of the heart. The inner emotion of anger and its often verbal expression in the use of invectives against one's brother (or neighbor), both of which often lead to murder, are judged alike. In the sight of God, intention and result are viewed on the same plane and constitute a serious violation of the apodictic injunction, "You shall not murder." Jesus' words in verse 22 transcend the Old Testament declaration of a right standing before God on the basis of adherence to legal ordinances and demand the satisfaction of the apodictic law which expresses God's true intention in this respect. Therefore it is invalid to attempt to make casuistic distinctions concerning degrees of punishment via legal ordinances and assume that one has met God's true intention (absolute demand) by meeting the demands of the ordinances. Jesus shattered this legalistic conception of righteousness.

Guelich notes that Jesus' use of the same legal format—but filled with "logic chopping" by the intentional incongruity between crime and punishment—satirically comments on the fallacious reasoning of scribal exegesis and suggests that these ordinances in 5:22 should not be taken in a literal sense.<sup>9</sup> This interpretation sees the "Gehenna of fire" referring to the final eschatological judgment.<sup>10</sup> Without this meaning, the intended incongruity between crime and punishment disappears along with Jesus' satirical thrust aimed at the scribal interpretation of the law.

#### MATTHEW 10:28 (= LUKE 12:4-5)

This verse is part of Jesus' discourse in Matthew that deals with the related topics of mission and martyrdom. Within this general context Jesus exhorted the disciples to fearlessness in the face of opposition and persecution. "And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell ['Gehenna')." The parallel text in Luke (12:4-5) follows a woe section (11:41-54) directed against the lawyers (Pharisees and scribes) and is preceded immediately by Je-

<sup>9</sup> Guelich, "Mt 5:22: Its Meaning and Integrity," 51. He states that these ordinances are obviously not to be taken literally. "No one would ever attempt to take another to trial for anger, nor to the Sanhedrin for using the common invective **ῥήματα**, nor would one be subject to eternal damnation for using the nearly synonymous **μωρεῖς**." Zahn observes that the choice of form and content was deliberately satirical to demonstrate the inadequacy of the Jewish understanding of the Law (Theodor Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Matthaus*, 4th ed. [Leipzig: A. Deichert, 1922], 228). One may observe here the difficulty of initiating court proceedings against someone on the basis of anger or the use of invectives.

<sup>10</sup> Guelich's words, "subject to eternal damnation," make this clear ("Mt 5:22: Its Meaning and Integrity," 51). The majority of modern scholars opt for this interpretation of "the Gehenna of fire" (e.g., Carson, Davies and Allison, Luz).

sus' warning against their hypocrisy, which will not remain uncovered (12:1-3).<sup>11</sup> This warning is addressed to Jesus' disciples. As Marshall observes, the general contexts in the two Gospels are thus not dissimilar, in that both sayings are addressed to the disciples rather than to the crowds or Jesus' opponents, and both are set in the immediate context of troubles impending for the disciples.<sup>12</sup>

Jesus' exhortations in Matthew 10:28 and Luke 12:4-5 show an antithesis between the fear of men and the fear of God. In Matthew, Jesus contrasted the ability of man who can kill (**apoktēnontwn**) only the body with that of God who can destroy (**apolesai**) both body and soul in Gehenna.<sup>13</sup> In Luke, on the other hand, the contrast is between man who can kill (**apokteinontwn**) and God who both kills (**apokteinhai**) and casts (**epbal ein**) into Gehenna, after killing. The fear of men, then, deals with the fear of death, which men are able to inflict in that they are able to kill (**apoktēnontwn**) the body (**swma**) but not the soul (**tha de yuxha mh dunamenwn apokteinhai**). The fear of God deals with God's ability to destroy both body and soul in Gehenna (**ton dunamenon kai yuxha kai swma apolesai epgeenn**^). Since both man and God are able to kill, the emphasis of the saying lies on God's ability to destroy in or cast into Gehenna.

This significant saying is one of the more explicit statements in Scripture relating to judgment in the afterlife.<sup>14</sup> One observes a **swma/yuxh**-dualism (dichotomy) in both parts of the Matthean saying. Luke, however, did not make this distinction; he mentioned only the body. This, however, should not be interpreted as a Lucan objection to such a distinction, since it occurs in his writings elsewhere (Luke 12:19-23; Acts 20:10).<sup>15</sup> This dualism, though, must not be pressed too far in the direction of Hellenistic anthropology, which saw the body and soul as distinct ontological parts of man with the **yuxh** ("soul") constituting the true human ego and possessing immortality, the **swma** ("body") being an obstacle or prison or at best an indifferent means of attaining the immortality of the **yuxh** in a realm

<sup>11</sup> The larger context is the extensive central section, usually referred to as the travel account, in which Jesus uttered many sayings to His disciples and the crowds on His way from Galilee to Jerusalem via Samaria (Luke 9:51-19:10).

<sup>12</sup> I. Howard Marshall, "Uncomfortable Words VI. 'Fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell' (Mt 10:28 R.S.V.)," *Expository Times* 81 (1969-70): 276.

<sup>13</sup> Gundry observes the "neat parallelism" in Matthew's saying, which in his opinion is a trademark of Matthew's style. "The antithetic parallels develop between killing and not killing and between the body and the soul" (Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982], 197).

<sup>14</sup> In the teaching of Jesus, only the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31) furnishes more details with regard to this subject.

<sup>15</sup> See Marshall, "Uncomfortable Words VI," 277.

outside the material/sense world.<sup>16</sup> A greater emphasis appears to be placed on this dualism in the first part of the Matthean saying, where man can kill only the **swīa**, but not the **yuxh**. Here man seems to stand at a distance from his **swīa**.<sup>17</sup> **Yuxh** should be understood as the aspect of man that is destined for either eternal salvation or eternal judgment (damnation/destruction) and must always be viewed as being bound up with the resurrection body.<sup>18</sup> The use and development of these concepts should be viewed against a Semitic, rather than a Hellenistic, background, though the latter's influence on the former cannot be ignored, especially during the intertestamental period.<sup>19</sup> In the first part of Matthew 10:28, then, death implies separation of the body and soul, the former being vulnerable to killing by man in that physical life is bound up with the body. However, the soul is beyond man's reach. Therefore the disciples are not to fear men, since their eternal destiny is beyond the reach of men.

In the second part of the Matthean saying, the "dualism" seems to conform more distinctly to the Semitic ideal, in that the two concepts are complementary and refer to the totality of the human person.<sup>20</sup> Thus the disciples were commanded to fear the one who "has the ability to "destroy" (**apolesai**) both soul and body (**kai>yuxha kai>swīa**), that is, the whole person, in Gehenna (**eh geenn**<sup>^</sup>). The majority of commentators agree that God is in view here, not Satan. God alone has the power and authority to determine the destinies of

<sup>16</sup> *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, s.v. "**swīa**," by Eduard Schweizer, 7:1024-94, esp. 1060; cf. *ibid.*, s.v. "**yuxh**," by Albert Dihle, 9:608-60, esp. 612-13, 645-46.

<sup>17</sup> Schweizer, "**swīa**," 7:1058, n. 362. This distance, though, is not to be confused with the Platonic distinction of body and soul where man is viewed as being endowed with an incarnate soul. Rather man is an ensouled body, where both body and soul embrace the whole man, though seen from different standpoints. In Hebrews 13:3, as Schweizer observes, the formulation that man is in the body represents a similar thought.

<sup>18</sup> *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, s.v. "Soul," by Gunther Harder, 3:686. The resurrection of the just as well as the unjust was a firmly established concept by the first century A.D.

<sup>19</sup> A discussion of the relationship between Semitic and Hellenistic, specifically Platonic, anthropology and the latter's influence on the former, especially during the intertestamental period, is beyond the scope of this study. For a discussion of this topic the reader is referred to the articles cited in notes 16 and 18. For extended discussions of this topic, see Martin Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus*, 2d ed., Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 10 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1973); and Robert H. Gundry, *Soma in Biblical Theology*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 29 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 87-160.

<sup>20</sup> Schweizer observes that the body and soul (or living force) are complementary here, and refer to man as a whole (Schweizer, "**swīa**," 7:1058). See Marshall, "Uncomfortable Words VI," 277, for a similar view.

men.<sup>21</sup> This is corroborated by the form of the similar saying in Mark 9:45, 47, where the use of the passive **bl hqhñai** is a periphrasis for the action of God.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore nowhere in the New Testament are believers commanded to fear Satan; instead they are told to resist him (James 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8-9).

What is meant by the verb "destroy" (**apōl luni**)? In the active voice its most common meaning is "to destroy or ruin," which often occurs as a mere synonym for **apokteinw** ("to kill").<sup>23</sup> In the middle voice its counterpart is "to be destroyed or ruined," which is often synonymous with **apoqhnskw** ("to die," or "to perish").<sup>24</sup> Also **apōl luni** is often rendered in the middle voice, "to be lost," the literal meaning being illustrated in the trilogy of parables in Luke 15.<sup>25</sup>

However, the *crux interpretum* of **apōl luni** and its cognate noun **apwleia** concerns their use as the vocabulary of "destruction" in relation to the final state of perdition. This use forms part of the argument of those holding to the doctrine of annihilation rather than an eternal state of conscious suffering.<sup>26</sup> An extended discussion of this

<sup>21</sup> A recent dissenting opinion (i.e., that the devil and not God is in view here) is voiced by Walter Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Mattheus*, Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament 1, 9th ed. (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1981), 297. Stendahl presents a similar view (Krister Stendahl, "Matthew," in *Peake's Commentary on the Bible*, ed. Matthew Black and H. H. Rowley [London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1962], 783). Niven offers yet a different interpretation, namely, that he who has the power to cast into hell, or destroy in hell, is the power of evil (W. D. Niven, "Luke 12:4," *Expository Times* 26 [1914-15]: 44-45). This interpretation rests upon a defective view of the fear of God.

<sup>22</sup> James 4:12 refers to God as the only Law-giver and Judge who is able to either save (**swšai**) or destroy (**apolesai**).

<sup>23</sup> For example Matthew 2:13 reads, "For Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him" (**tou apolesai autō**). And Luke 17:27, 29, referring to the generation of Noah and Lot, states that the Flood and the fire "destroyed them all" (**apwlesen pantaj**).

<sup>24</sup> For example Matthew 8:25, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing" (**Kurie, swšon, apōl lumaqa**).

<sup>25</sup> See Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2d ed., rev. F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 95 for a discussion of the full semantic range of dmS,Uvpt and corresponding references.

<sup>26</sup> See, for example, David L. Edwards with John Stott, *Essentials: A Liberal-Evangelical Dialogue* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1988), 315. In a recent dialogue between these two theologians of different persuasions, that is, liberal and evangelical, respectively, the latter (Stott) states the following regarding the question of everlasting suffering of impenitent sinners. "In order to answer this question, we need to survey the biblical material afresh and to open our minds (not just our hearts) to the possibility that Scripture points in the direction of annihilation, and that 'eternal conscious torment' is a tradition which has to yield to the supreme authority of Scripture." He then says there are four major arguments that need to be reconsidered, namely, those relating to language, imagery, justice, and universalism.

doctrine is beyond the scope of this study, though in passing a few observations are in order. There is no lexicographical evidence for the annihilationists' position that **apōl lūni** means "to annihilate" or "to pass into nonexistence." On the contrary, this Greek word refers to "definitive destruction, not merely in the sense of physical existence, but rather of an eternal plunge into Hades and a hopeless destiny of death."<sup>27</sup> In Matthew 10:28 and Luke 12:4-5 one might also observe that whereas Matthew uses **apōlesai eñ geenn<sup>^</sup>**, the parallel in Luke uses **eñbaleiñ eij tha geennan**, and the semantic range of **bał lw** cannot be extended to include the idea of annihilation without undue strain and circular reasoning.<sup>28</sup> And, as Gundry observes, literary considerations may have dictated Matthew's use of **apōlesai** in that its meaning comes closer to the preceding **apokteĩnai**.<sup>29</sup>

Another question concerns Gehenna itself. Scholars have noted the differences between the two Gospels,<sup>30</sup> and the presence of the aforementioned body-soul dualism in Matthew and its lesser prominence in Luke have led them to speculate that Luke is less dualistic in his anthropology than is Matthew.<sup>31</sup> In their eschatologies, however, the opposite appears to be true, especially with respect to Gehenna. Matthew presents Gehenna as the place of retribution for

<sup>27</sup> *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, s.v. "**apōl lūni**," by A. Oepke, 1:394-97, esp. 396; cf. *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, s.v. "Destroy, Perish, Ruin," by H. C. Hahn, 1:462-65. Arndt and Gingrich have no category of "to annihilate" or "to pass into nonexistence" under this term (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 95). Of further interest is Morey's note on Thayer's lexicon, which defines **apōl lūni** as "to be delivered up to eternal misery" (Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* [New York: American Book, 1886], 64). Morey states, "Since Thayer himself was a Unitarian who did not believe in eternal punishment, his definition could only be the result of his knowledge of the meaning of this Greek word" (Robert A. Morey, *Death and the Afterlife* [Minneapolis: Bethany, 1984], 90). The major flaw of the annihilationists' position is their attempt to attach a different meaning to **aiwñioj**, "eternal," especially within the same text where eternal punishment and eternal life are contrasted as, for example, in Matthew 25:46. For a brief overview of the major arguments and the relevant texts of both doctrines see Murray J. Harris, *Raised Immortal: Resurrection and Immortality in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 180-85.

<sup>28</sup> "Circular reasoning" in this case means defining **bał lw** contextually in terms of Gehenna with the preconceived idea that the subjects of this infernal place will eventually be annihilated.

<sup>29</sup> "Despite his liking **bał lw** and **eñbał lw**, Matthew replaces **eñbaleiñ** with another of his favorites, **apōlesai**, because its meaning 'to destroy' comes closer to the preceding 'to kill'" (Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art*, 197). This again weakens the force of the argument that **apōl lūni** means "to annihilate" or "to cease to exist."

<sup>30</sup> K. Hahnhart, *The Intermediate State in the New Testament* (Franeker: T. Wever, 1966), 36-37.

<sup>31</sup> Regarding this saying, Gundry notes that in Luke the duality is not so clear; the dichotomy between body and soul is less clearly expressed (Gundry, *Soma in Biblical Theology*, 114, n. 3).

the total person, that is, for both body and soul, and thus it could presumably refer to the final destiny of the wicked after the resurrection and the final judgment.<sup>32</sup> Luke, on the other hand, can be seen as envisioning reward and punishment immediately after death—perhaps not so much on the basis of Luke 12:4-5 as on the basis of Luke 16:19-31, the story of Lazarus and the rich man, as well as Luke 23:43, the words of Jesus to the dying criminal, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise." Here man might presumably be envisioned in a disembodied state immediately after death, and consequently the soul could properly receive either reward or punishment. This would involve a dualistic view of man that seems to be out of character with the understanding of man and death generally presented in Luke.<sup>33</sup>

On the basis of these eschatologically related differences between Matthew and Luke, Milikowsky suggests that the two evangelists use the term "Gehenna" to denote different notions of retribution.<sup>34</sup> In Matthew the term denotes the eschatological corporeal Gehenna where the impenitent sinner in his resurrection body receives divine retribution after his resurrection and judgment.<sup>35</sup> In

<sup>32</sup> Gundry states that when body and soul are explicitly said to be together in Gehenna, one might assume that this refers to a Gehenna that is postresurrection and postjudgment (ibid., 114-15). Dautzenberg gives an extensive discussion of this saying with special reference to its use of **yuxh** and **sw̄na** (Gerhard Dautzenberg, *Sein Leben Bewahren: yuxh in den Herrenworten der Evangelien*, Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 14 [Munich: Kosel-Verlag, 1966], 138-53). He states that Jesus' saying presupposes the Jewish understanding of an intermediate state on the basis of His use of **yuxh** alone (v. 28a), and the belief in a resurrection on the basis of **kai-yuxh kai-sw̄na**. Dautzenberg says the judgment of God presupposes the totality of man (**kai-yuxh kai-sw̄na**) since neither responsibility nor punishment can be divided between body and soul. This totality or living unity (*lebendige Einheit*) of men is reestablished at the resurrection. God's judgment is to be feared because, unlike the temporal or earthly judgment, which can deal only with the body, God's judgment extends to this resurrected reconstituted totality of man, which God is able to destroy in Gehenna (ibid., 149). The Gehenna envisioned on the basis of these observations is the eschatological, postresurrection, postjudgment Gehenna, that is, the final destiny of the wicked.

<sup>33</sup> Ellis states, "It is true that some groups in first-century Judaism did view man dualistically, and Luke 16:19-31 appears to presuppose that kind of background" (E. Earle Ellis, *Eschatology in Luke* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972], 9-10). However, the dualism in Lucan eschatology does not concern itself primarily with questions relating to anthropology, but rather with the relationship of the duality of the ages (this present age and the age to come) and the centrality of the function of Jesus' Person and mission in these two ages. For Luke, the Person and mission of Jesus define "the nature of the continuity and discontinuity between this age and the age to come" (ibid., 14). His ministry of healings and other miracles as well as His own resurrection "point to the new age as a 'fulfillment,' a deliverance of the present material creation from the death powers of this (present) age" (ibid.).

<sup>34</sup> Chaim Milikowsky, "Which Gehenna? Retribution and Eschatology in the Synoptic Gospels and in Early Jewish Texts," *New Testament Studies* 34 (1988): 238-49.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 244. Milikowsky's scenario for the Matthean eschatology is as follows: Matthew knew of a general day of judgment, a general resurrection, and a corporeal

Luke, on the other hand, Gehenna denotes a postmortem, incorporeal Gehenna or spiritual realm where the disembodied soul receives divine retribution immediately after death.<sup>36</sup> As a critique of Milikowsky's view one might observe that an imposing superstructure has been erected on a somewhat meager foundation. One must rely on non-Synoptic material to work out such detailed eschatological schemes in both Matthew and Luke. However, one must admit that the Gospel of Luke refers more to immediate postmortem reward/retribution than do the Gospels of Matthew or Mark.<sup>37</sup>

In summary the following observations may be made regarding these sayings in Matthew and Luke. Within the context of persecution and opposition to the spread of the gospel, they contain elements of encouragement and warnings. They remind Christ's followers that man's ability to inflict punishment is limited and thus they should be fearless in the face of such obstacles. Man's punitive power enables him to kill only the body. In contrast the sayings counsel believers to fear God because His power extends beyond death, enabling Him to inflict final, irrevocable punishment on man by condemning the whole person to Gehenna. The nature and duration of punishment are not elaborated as such in these sayings. However, one is not amiss in interpreting Gehenna as the final eschatological judgment, which involves the conscious suffering of man as a whole. Jesus emphasized the threat of divine retribution with its implied dreadfulness and terror, rather than fear of man's ability to kill. The durative aspect of Gehenna, though, is not explicit in these sayings and must be derived by implication and on the basis of other texts in connection with this term.

Gehenna. But no indication is given that he knew of either reward or punishment in an intermediate state immediately after death. Thus Matthew refers first to the general resurrection, then to the great day of judgment, after which Gehenna (with corporeal punishment) will receive the wicked for retribution. This is also the view of Dautzenberg (*Sein Leben Bewahren*, 147-49).

<sup>36</sup> Milikowsky, "Which Gehenna? Retribution and Eschatology in the Synoptic Gospels and in Early Jewish Texts," 243-44. For the Lucan eschatology, Milikowsky suggests the following: Luke knew of an immediate postmortem reward and punishment and the resurrection of the just. The order of events is as follows: There is an immediate postmortem judgment, then the wicked are sent to hell (called either Hades or Gehenna in Luke), whereas the righteous enter Paradise from which they are resurrected with Jesus at His second coming. The wicked are not resurrected, since Luke did not mention their specific resurrection. He wrote of only a resurrection of the just (Luke 14:14). Thus "Luke knows of no post-resurrection Gehenna into which the reunited body and soul of the wicked are flung" (*ibid.*, 243-44).

<sup>37</sup> Dautzenberg, *Sein Leben Bewahren*, 138. He further observes that the Lucan version of the saying suggests a Gehenna that blurs the usually held New Testament distinction between Hades and Gehenna and aligns it with the post-New Testament Rabbinic Gehenna, where it functions as an intermediate state, usually with purgatorial powers. Luke, though, gives no indication whatever in his writings that Gehenna is purgatorial in nature.

### Warnings to the Scribes and Pharisees

In the two final passages in the Synoptics where the term "Gehenna" occurs—Matthew 23:15, 33—the word is used in connection with the scribes and the Pharisees. In Jesus' final controversy in the temple court He was challenged by the scribes, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees (Matt. 21:23-22:46). This controversy was followed by Jesus' pronouncement of a series of seven woes against these opponents, each being introduced by the formula, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," and followed by a reason for the woe (23:13-36).<sup>38</sup> A lament over Jerusalem concludes this main section (vv. 37-39), followed by the Olivet Discourse (chaps. 24-25), which in turn is followed by the final events of the passion week.

The woes containing the word "Gehenna" occur only in Matthew, though a similar section of woes is also found in Luke 11:37-54.<sup>39</sup> The woe pronouncements scathingly indict the scribes and Pharisees, the main point being their failure to understand the Scriptures properly, especially with regard to Jesus' Person as the Messiah.<sup>40</sup> The first woe in which the word "Gehenna" occurs (Matt. 23:15) deals with the missionary efforts of the scribes and Pharisees.<sup>41</sup> Jesus' accusation centers around their eagerness to win converts (**proshlutoi**) for their party, for which they were willing to travel about on land and sea; they spared no efforts to win a single convert over to their cause anywhere.<sup>42</sup> The converts in view were not merely sympathizers loosely connected with a synagogue as so-called God-fearers, but were those who had been baptized, circumcised, and pledged to submit to the full rigors of the Jewish law, including the oral traditions for which the Pharisees were so eager. Thus they became converts not so much to Judaism as to the Pharisaic party.

<sup>38</sup> The only exception is the second woe (Matt. 23:16-22) where, instead of being referred to as scribes and Pharisees, these groups are lumped together as "blind guides." Thus the introductory formula reads, "Woe to you, blind guides, who say."

<sup>39</sup> For a discussion of the Synoptic relationship of these woes (source, priority, context, and authenticity), see I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 491-93. Also see D. A. Carson, "Matthew," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 8:476-77, and Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art*, 459-70. For a discussion of Matthew's alleged anti-Pharisaic stance compared with the other Synoptic Gospels see T. Francis Glasson's "Anti-Pharisaism in St. Matthew," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 51 (1960-61): 316-20.

<sup>40</sup> Regarding the seven woes in Matthew, Carson states, "What stands out is the centrality of rightly understanding the Scriptures—a theme that is reflected in all the preceding controversies and is no less related to Jesus' rejection of the claims of the teachers of the law" ("Matthew," 8:477).

<sup>41</sup> The verse is free of significant textual variants.

<sup>42</sup> The only other occurrences of **proshlutoj** in the New Testament are found in Acts 2:11;6:5;13:43.

Jesus said such a convert had been made "twice as much a son of Gehenna" as the Pharisees themselves. Carson's interpretation of this somewhat obscure phrase is helpful. He notes that "the Pharisees' interpretation and the rules deduced from Scripture became so fully their converts' that they 'out-Phariseed' the Pharisees" and thus became locked into a theological system that left no room for acknowledging Jesus as the Messiah, effectively barring their ever entering the kingdom of God.<sup>43</sup> Thus rather than "sons of the kingdom" (13:38), these proselytes—like the Judaizers who later vehemently opposed the Apostle Paul's missionary efforts and those of the infant church in general<sup>44</sup>—were "twice as much the sons of Gehenna" as the scribes and Pharisees themselves.<sup>45</sup> The use of the comparative with the descriptive genitive<sup>46</sup> leaves no doubt that their destination was Gehenna. They were bound up with all that is implied in this term, namely, the irreversible destiny of the wicked, which refers here specifically to the scribes and Pharisees. These effectively barred the people's entrance into the kingdom of God through their teaching, at the center of which lay their obstinate refusal to acknowledge Jesus as God's Messiah. If, then, the scribes and Pharisees were bound up with a destiny in Gehenna, how much more so their overzealous converts who were outdoing their teachers in their antimessianic stance? It should be observed that an exact meaning of Gehenna cannot be derived from this passage; a more accurate meaning must be determined from its use in other more revealing contexts. However, its use by Jesus in this woe pronouncement clearly implies a strongly negative judgmental connotation, harmo-

<sup>43</sup> "Matthew," 8:479. As noted by Carson, modern psychology concurs with this observation, since converts or pupils of religious teachers often outdo their teachers in zeal.

<sup>44</sup> Walter Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthaus*, Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament 1, 5th ed. (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1981), 490-91.

<sup>45</sup> The words "son of" followed by a genitive is a commonly used Semitic idiom in Matthew, "son" being often used in a metaphorical sense as in this case. See James H. Moulton and W. F. Howard, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1928), 2:440-41. The comparative **diplōteron** clearly refers to the scribes and Pharisees. For the use of this adverb of manner as a comparative, see F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament*, trans. and rev. Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 33, para. 61 (2); 55, para. 102 (4).

<sup>46</sup> Zerwick notes that a certain intimate relationship to a person or thing "is expressed in a manner not exclusively Semitic, but in our literature certainly prevalently so, by 'son,' **uioj**, followed by a genitive" (M. Zerwick, *Biblical Greek*, Scripta Pontificii Instituti Biblici 114, trans. Joseph Smith [Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963], par. 42-43). When **uioj** is used with the genitive of the name of a thing or an abstract notion, the relationship varies according to the subject matter. Thus a "son of Gehenna" is one worthy of Gehenna in that he "shows this by the whole tenor of his life, just as in the case of a 'son of light,' or the opposite a 'son of darkness.'" In Luke 16:8 the sons of light and darkness are contrasted.

nizing well with its use elsewhere in the literature of the intertestamental period and the New Testament.

The second occurrence of Gehenna in the woe section is in Matthew 23:33. In the seventh woe (vv. 29-32) Jesus denounced the religious leaders' seeming devotion to the former prophets and righteous Israelites, a devotion exhibited in their building monuments to the prophets and claiming that they would not have taken part in killing the prophets. The superficiality of such pious activity is evident in that they were already plotting to kill Jesus to end His activity (21:37-38, 45-46). In scathing irony Jesus told them to bring the sin of their ancestors "to fruition by doing what they [the fathers] left undone," namely, to fill up the measure of their fathers' guilt (v. 32)<sup>47</sup> so as to unleash God's wrath on their generation (vv. 34-36).<sup>48</sup>

On the heels of this ironic command follows the rhetorical question in verse 33, "You serpents, you brood of vipers, how shall you escape the sentence of hell?" This question clearly echoes John the Baptist's proclamation of judgment.<sup>49</sup> Since the scribes and Pharisees filled up "the measure of the guilt of their forefathers," their **krisewj thj geennhj** ("sentence of hell") was inevitable, unless they had a radical change of heart (which, as history has shown, did not occur). The meaning of this phrase may vary, depending on the category of genitive chosen for **geennhj**. The possibilities, though, are limited to two or three options: an objective genitive, in which case a possible translation would be "the judgment which condemns to Gehenna,"<sup>50</sup> or a genitive of definition or apposition, which gives rise to the attractive translation, "the judgment which is Gehenna."<sup>51</sup>

As already noticed in Matthew 23:15 regarding "son of Ge-

<sup>47</sup> The imperative **plhrwsate** in verse 32 particularly emphasizes the force of the irony.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News according to Matthew* (Manta: John Knox, 1975), 443 and Carson, "Matthew," 8:483-84.

<sup>49</sup> In Matthew 3:7 John the Baptist's rhetorical question of escape from judgment with its derogatory introductory epithet **Gennhata ekidwn** ("brood [offspring] of vipers") was directed against the religious leadership, namely, the Pharisees and Sadducees, whereas in Luke 3:7 it was used of the multitudes. Subsequent Matthean usage of this phrase on the lips of Jesus (12:34; 23:33 [in the latter it is preceded by duets, "serpents"]), clearly shows that Jesus identified Himself with John the Baptist's view of the Jewish religious leadership, who bore the brunt of the responsibility for Jesus' death (cf. Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Mattheus*, 94).

<sup>50</sup> See for example, Alfred Plummer, *An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Matthew* (London: Robert Scott, 1915), 321. McNeile translates the phrase "fit of the sentence of being cast into G(ehenna)" (Alan Hugh McNeile, *The Gospel according to St. Matthew* [reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980], 339).

<sup>51</sup> Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich define this phrase as "being punished in hell" (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 452-53). This is essentially equivalent to the above suggested translation.

henna," the phrase "sentence of hell" by itself does not offer detailed information about Gehenna's temporal or spatial aspects. However, implied in the phrase and in conjunction with the similar question posed to the religious leaders by John the Baptist earlier (Matt. 3:7), several observations may be made. The phrase in question in 3:7 is flight from **thj mel loushj ofghj** ("the wrath to come"). This is clearly eschatological<sup>52</sup> and refers to the dreadful and unavoidable judgment of God in the "day of the Lord"<sup>53</sup> at the end of the age. However, this **ofgh** is not confined to the tribulation period inaugurating the end of the age. The wrath extends to and includes the final judgment and as such can refer to the judgment of Gehenna.<sup>54</sup> Jesus' woe section in Matthew 23:13-36 includes one of His strongest condemnations of the Jewish religious leaders, who through their teaching, especially their antimessianic stance were barring people from entering the kingdom of God. As such they were "sons of Gehenna" whose destiny is inexorably bound up with all that is associated with and implied in this concept, namely, the dreadful, irreversible, eternal judgment that God will execute at the end of this age on all who oppose His will.

<sup>52</sup> The future aspect of "the wrath to come" is undisputed by commentators. In fact, as noted by Helmut Merklein, the future aspect of this judgment appears to be the one thing of absolute certainty with the Baptist ("Die Umkehrpredigt bei Johannes dem Tauffer and Jesus von Nazaret," *Biblische Zeitschrift* 25 [1981]: 33). He notes, "Was kommt, ist der 'Zorn,' also ein furchtbares Strafgericht Gottes. Die Gerichtszukunft scheint für Johannes das einzig Sichere zu sein." Cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew I—VII*, 304.

<sup>53</sup> Commentators invariably notice the connection between this "wrath to come" and the "day of the Lord" as depicted, for example, in Amos 5:18-20 and Zephaniah 1:14-18. See for example Carl R. Kazmierski, "The Stones of Abraham: John the Baptist and the End of Torah (Matt 3,7-10 par. Luke 3,7-9)," *Biblica* 68 (1987): 30; Carson, "Matthew," 8:103; and *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, s.v. "**ofgh**," by Gustav Stahlin, 5:413-16, 419-47, esp. 431. Stahlin states, "Thus, in accordance with its predominant characteristic, the Last Day is called **h[h]era thj ofghj** (Rom 2:5; Rev 6:17)."

<sup>54</sup> Stahlin states, "There are two points in the future where eschatological **ofgh** has a place, first, in the tribulation before the end, then in the final judgment itself" (Stahlin, "**ofgh**," 430-31). He further observes that in rabbinical literature this wrath is sometimes equated with the judgment of Gehenna, in Pauline literature with the **h[er] % ofghj kai apokaluyewj dikaiokrisiaj tou qeou?** "the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God," Rom. 2:5), and in Revelation 11:18 with **h[ofgh] sou kai o[ kairoj twñ nekrown kriqhñai** ("Thy wrath, and the time for the dead to be judged"). Stahlin interprets the phrase "judgment of Gehenna" as an objective genitive. He observes that the wrath connected with this phrase "is not so much the righteous anger of the Judge of the world as what He imposes . . . **ekdikhsij** (cf. Lk. 21:22 f.), the opposite of **dikaiwsij**, the denial of salvation" (ibid., 431). Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich define **h[er] ai ekdikhsewj** in Luke 21:22 as "the Last Judgment" (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 238). The judgment of Gehenna, then, refers to the final judgment of God in the eschaton before the beginning of the eternal state.

### Gehenna in the Remainder of the New Testament

Outside the Synoptics the term "Gehenna" occurs in the New Testament only in James 3:6. This verse is fraught with difficulties, both linguistic and interpretive, because of its unusual syntax and metaphorical language. Laws notes, "The general sense of the statement is clear enough, but . . . it is made in a verse which is extraordinarily difficult for the translator and exegete."<sup>55</sup> These difficulties, though, need not hinder the understanding of the meaning of Gehenna in this verse.<sup>56</sup>

Following his discussion of idle faith (2:14-26), James proceeded to discuss idle speech (3:1-4:12)<sup>57</sup> expanding on a subject raised earlier in the epistle under the general rubric of what constitutes "true religion" (1:26-27). The main thought of chapter 3 concerns the use of the tongue and its effects. Though it is a small member of the body, its double-minded use produces far-reaching consequences (3:5, 9-10), with the individual who is able to control it being praised as a **teleioj anhr** ("perfect man"), able to control his whole body (v. 2). James laced his treatment heavily with metaphorical language, occasionally interjecting an explanation. In 3:5a he interpreted the metaphors: the tongue is a small part of the body, yet its uncontrolled use has far-reaching, harmful consequences.

In 3:5b the disproportion between the size of the tongue and its effects continues, but it does so with a decidedly negative connotation<sup>58</sup> through using the metaphor of a small fire that is able to set

<sup>55</sup> Sophie Laws, *A Commentary on the Epistle of James, Harper's New Testament Commentaries* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980), 148. Dibelius states, "To be sure, the understanding of the metaphors still does not guarantee the understanding of v 6, which in its present form is among the most controversial in the New Testament" (Martin Dibelius, *James, Hermeneia*, rev. Heinrich Greeven, trans. Michael A. Williams [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976], 193). As expected, these difficulties are reflected in the various English translations offered for this verse.

<sup>56</sup> For a brief, lucid summary of its history of interpretation, including a listing of the difficulties and their proposed solutions, the reader is referred to Peter Davids, *The Epistle of James, The New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 141-44. Cf. Douglas J. Moo, *The Letter of James: An Introduction and Commentary, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 123-26; Ralph P. Martin, *James, Word Biblical Commentary* (Waco: Word, 1988), 112-16. For more discussion, especially with regard to background material relevant to New Testament culture and literature, see Dibelius, *James*, 193-98.

<sup>57</sup> See Davids, *James*, 27-28, for a possible outline of the epistle.

<sup>58</sup> The first two metaphors, the bit in a horse's mouth and the rudder of a ship being used for control and direction, appear to have a positive or at least a neutral connotation. With the metaphor of a little flame or spark igniting a forest fire, though, the metaphor has a negative connotation. Verse 6, which states the destructive power of the tongue, confirms this observation.

ablaze a large forest, an unguarded fire spreading into a roaring inferno. In verse 6a, James identified the metaphor of fire with the tongue. In the rest of the verse, he elaborated on the tongue's potentially destructive power, including a hint of its origin, namely, Gehenna. He achieved this elaboration through a series of "stock phrases and expressions which, if taken unidiomatically, are a mixture of metaphor and grammar," which pose the aforementioned challenge to the exegete and translator today.<sup>59</sup> Moo paraphrases the verse as follows: "The tongue's fiery destructive power affects all of human existence, from beginning to end, and in all circumstances," and the source of this "enormously destructive potential" is Gehenna.<sup>60</sup>

The figure of fire in connection with Gehenna is familiar, but the unique feature of this passage is that James traced the source of the potential evil of the tongue beyond the desires or strong cravings (**epiqunia**) of the individual (as in James 1:14-15) to Gehenna. What is meant by this statement about Gehenna? One view is that Gehenna is the familiar place of punishment, the final abode and destiny of the wicked. In this case, the sense of the phrase is that "the tongue directs human life towards inevitable retribution, and the course of life has about it already this doomed character."<sup>61</sup> Another possibility attaches the same meaning to Gehenna, though by metonymous extension and/or implication the great destructive potential of the tongue is traced to the chief denizen of this infernal place, Satan himself.<sup>62</sup> The Apocalypse of Abraham, dated around the turn of the first century A.D.,<sup>63</sup> explicitly affirms the presence of Satan (Azazel) in hell (=Gehenna).<sup>64</sup> Thus toward the end of the

<sup>59</sup> Davids, *James*, 144.

<sup>60</sup> Moo, *James*, 124-26. His suggested translation is, "The tongue is a fire; the tongue makes itself (**kaqistati**) the unrighteous world (**olkosmj thj adikiaj**) in our members, which stains the whole body and sets fire to the the course of human life (**ton troxon thj genesewj**), and is set on fire by Gehenna.

<sup>61</sup> Laws, *James*, 152.

<sup>62</sup> Martin interprets this verse in relation to the body of believers on the basis of 3:1 (there James urged caution with respect to the office of teacher within the body of Christ, because teachers "shall incur a stricter judgment" [**meizon krima l hnyomeqa**]). Martin says that "in short, v 6 pronounces the tongue as evil—quite capable of doing deadly (i.e., Satanic) harm to the body of believers—because it emanates from the evil one" (*James*, 116 [italics added]).

<sup>63</sup> Rubinkiewicz, dates the work subsequent to the debacle of A.D. 70 to the late first/early second century A.D. (R. Rubinkiewicz, "The Apocalypse of Abraham," in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:686-88).

<sup>64</sup> "The Apocalypse of Abraham," 14:5; 31:3, 5. Dibelius points out that this is the earliest reference to state explicitly that Satan is an inhabitant of Gehenna (*James*, 198).

New Testament canonical era there is evidence that identifies Satan as a present rather than merely a future inhabitant of Gehenna.<sup>65</sup>

### Summary

The use of Gehenna in the Synoptics is parenetic in nature and occurs in relation to the Person and work of Jesus Christ. As the Messiah, He is the fulfillment of the Law. He transcends the Mosaic injunctions and fleshes out their divinely intended purpose, which the Jewish religious leadership—scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees—misunderstood. Their antimessianic stance inexorably tied their final destiny to Gehenna. In the Synoptics Gehenna refers to the final, irreversible, eschatological judgment, which will last forever and is reserved for all who refuse to submit to Messiah's God-given authority and rule. In James a further idea is added: Gehenna is the dwelling place of Satan, the source of the evil of the tongue. Thus the use of Gehenna in the New Testament harmonizes with the earliest tradition of the intertestamental period, a period that served as the developmental background of this concept.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>65</sup> This interpretation is somewhat weakened, though, by the late New Testament evidence of Revelation 20:7-10. There Satan's irrevocable confinement to "the lake of fire and brimstone" is clearly future for it will occur after the millennium. Based on Revelation 20:7-10, Foerster states that the seat of the devil before his confinement in "the lake of fire and brimstone" is not hell (cf. Rev. 12:9, 12) (*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, s.v. **diabolj**, by Werner Foerster, 2:71-81, esp. 80, n. 49). Cf. Adolf Schlatter, *Der Brief des Jakobus* (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1956), 224, for a similar view. But Dibelius contests these observations. He states that "a decision regarding James 3:6 must not be made upon the basis of the statements in Revelation mentioned by Foerster" (*James*, 199). His point is well taken, especially in view of the highly figurative language used in Revelation, which in turn, calls for caution in its interpretation. A case in point is the account of Revelation 9:1-11, where an infernal host of dreadful looking creatures (some kind of locust, see vv. 7-10) are released from the smoking, bottomless pit. Their king is the "angel of the abyss" or "Apollyon," who is Satan. Admittedly, it is not clear whether he resides in this pit, but if not, he seems to have access to it as the ruling authority in this evil place, which could possibly be identified with "the lake of fire and brimstone" in Revelation 20:10 and thus perhaps with Gehenna. At any rate, Dibelius' comment must be given due weight, and one would not be amiss in assuming that the presence of Satan in Gehenna was an accepted idea by the time the New Testament was written during the latter half of the first century A.D.

<sup>66</sup> The New Testament uses other terms that further describe this final judgment with its intense suffering for the wicked. These include "flames" in Hades (Luke 16:23-24), "the furnace of fire" (Matt. 13:42, 50), "the eternal fire" (Matt. 25:41), "the lake of fire" (Rev. 19:20; 20:10, 14, 15; 21:8), and "weeping and gnashing of teeth" and "outer darkness" (phrases that occur together in Matt. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30) and "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (which occurs by itself in Matt. 13:42, 50; 24:51; Luke 13:28). For a study of these terms see the author's work, "The Development of the Concept of Gehenna and Its Use in the Synoptics," 229-42.

This material is cited with gracious permission from: y

Dallas Theological Seminary

3909 Swiss Ave.

Dallas, TX 75204

[www.dts.edu](http://www.dts.edu)

Please report any errors to Ted Hildebrandt at: [thildebrandt@gordon.edu](mailto:thildebrandt@gordon.edu)